SHRI VIJAY KUMAR YADAV (Nalanda): Mr. Speaker, Sir, there are about 40 lakh labourers working in the Beedi manufacturing industry and if we take into account their dependents and families as well, they number about two crores. In the State of Bihar alone, there are about four lakh Beedi workers and if their families too are taken into account, they number about twenty lakhs. They are an unorganised lot and do not enjoy the job security and other benefits being given to industrial workers. Taking advantage of the situation of these workers being unorganised, owners of Bidi manufacturing units in Bihar have started running cottage industries. This is an anti-worker and illegal act on their part and their objectives are to evade the provisions of the Factories Act, to deprive the workers of their legitimate rights and to evade crores of rupees that they have to pay to the Government as excise duty. I request the Government to check this conversion into cottage industries and to bring forward a Central legislation to check evasion of Excise Duty. This would prove beneficial to both the Government and the workers.

Dr. Gunvant Rambhau Sarode (Jalgaon): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to draw the attention of the House and the hon. Minister of Railways towards the loss of crores of rupees to the banana growers of Jalgaon district of Maharashtra, due to late running of railway racks. You may be aware of the fact that Jalgaon district of Maharashtra is the largest supplier of Bananas to the markets of northern India. These fruits are transported to various centres through railway racks and any delay in their reaching their respective destinations means great loss to the cultivators. If the train takes four or five days on its way, then the bananas become ripe as a result of which their prices fall. This has resulted in loss of at least 6-7 crore rupees to the farmers. I request the hon. Minister to take this into consideration and make such arrangements, so that the trains reach Delhi within two days of their departure from Jalgoan. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI SATYAPAL SINGH YADAV (Shahjahanpur): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to bring to the notice of the Government, the involvement and collusion of the Customs Collector posted at the Indira Gandhi International Airport, in smuggling activities. The Customs Collector, in connivance with his inspectors allow the smugglers to pass through the Green Channel. Honest inspectors, who oppose him are either suspended or cases are registered against them. Recently, on July 21, 1991, two people, carrying two large suit cases, who arrived by flight number HQ 408 on the Singapore-Delhi route were allowed to go through the green channel. In their suit cases, they carried smuggled goods including electronic items and gold. Interestingly, these two suitcases were cross-marked. An inspector, who dared to check the suitcases was threatened of disciplinary action and what's more, the customs collector took these smugglers with him and had a cup of tea with them. Four inspectors, who opposed him were booked under COFEPOSA but later on the court found them innocent. That no action has been taken against such a corrupt official goes on to show the incompetence of the Government. I urge upon the Government to the take stringent action against the smugglers and order an inquiry into the lapses and acts of omission, on the part of the said official during his tenure at the Indira Gandhi Airport.

[*English*]

SHRI SOBHANADREESWARA RAO VADDE (Vijayawada): Andhra Pradesh occupies a place next only to Karnataka in Sericulture cultivation in our country. It is the livelihood for nearly 9 lakh persons in Andhra Pradesh. Nearly 32,000 tonnes of Cacoons is produced in Andhra Pradesh. Sericulture is making rapid progress in my constituency in particular in Ramireddypalli, Jonnalagadda and Gampalagudem areas. These farmers have to take the cacoons to Chennapatna and other places in Karnataka

which is putting a lot of financial and physical strain on the farmers because if some delay takes place the quality of cacoons goes down.

So, I urge upon the Government to take immediate steps to provide marketing facilities in Andhra Pradesh so that the interests of Sericultural farmers are safeguarded. I would also urge upon the Government to set up a Silk Reeling Unit near Vijayawada. I request the Government to extend all incentives for taking up the Sericulture in a much bigger way.

SHRIMATI MALINI BHATTACHARAYA (Jadavpur): Sir, yesterday in the House there was a question about grounding of the aged aircrafts but my question is about the aging of human resource aboard aircrafts. The Minister in reply to one question said that 20 years old aircrafts need not be grounded. Then, Sir, on what logic are 45 year old woman employee —Air-hostesses in Air India aircrafts —considered fit to be grounded? Not only that, once grounded, Air India instructs such senior employees to be allotted the lowest clerical jobs. If it was thought that people beyond the age of 45 years acquire a certain condition of physical and mental debility then most of us would not be here. Moreover, male employees can serve in the aircrafts till they are 58.

Therefore, I would like to know why there is a different rule for women and why they are subjected to physical fitness examination every year after they attain 35 years of age. It may also be pointed out that this is being done in defiance of a Government directive issued on 16th October, 1989 which followed a report of the Petitions Committee on the basis of a petition filed by 700 Air-hostesses.

In 1990 the then Minister of Civil Aviation, Mr. Arif Mohammad Khan, also met a delegation of Air-hostesses and cabin crew and assured them that this discrimination would be removed. But even after this, one senior Air-Hostess, Dawn Biladwala, having reached the age of 45 has been served a notice to the effect that she is shifted to a ground job. So, it has become an urgent matter.

Now, the Minister has consented to meet me and some other lady MPs. on this matter today and I hope that he will take action. But I am bringing this up before the House because women M.Ps are here and women Ministers are here. I think that all the women will agree, and I hope that all the men will also agree, that this is not only a discrimination but it is discrimination of the most insulting and most humiliating kind (*Interruptions*). So everyone irrespective of sex and party affiliations should speak up against this violation of constitutional rights.

SHRIMATI BIBHU KUMARI DEVI (Tripura-East). We support you. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI SOBHANADREESWARA RAO VADDE: Sir, the Minister should have a tender heart to respond. (*Interruptions*)

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI MADHAV RAO SCINDIA): Sir, you yourself have been the Civil Aviation Minister. So, you are well seized of the problems. I am meeting the hon. member after Zero Hour is over and we will discuss the issue. (*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: They have full faith in you.

(*Interruptions*)

SHRI MADHAV RAO SCINDIA: I think Shri Nirmal Chatterjee being a bachelor is more exuberant to the cause of the women!

SHRI NIRMAL KANTI CHATTERJEE (Dum Dum): Who told you? I am not a bachelor. I am thinking of re-marrying!

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ARJUN SINGH): Mr. Spea-